

## Message Text

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13

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 AID-05

/023 W

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R 080420Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0920

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 0134

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (NOOTER, ROBERT H.)

SUBJ: BIO SKETCHES FOR NOOTER VISIT: MINISTER PUBLIC

HEALTH SEKANDAR

REF: KABUL 8102

NEA/PAB FOR SCHIFFERDECKER

1. DR. NAZAR MOHAMMAD SEKANDAR WAS APPOINTED MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEMBER OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE AS DAOUD FORMED HIS FIRST POST-COUP CABINET. SEKANDAR, FRENCH TRAINED CARDIOLOGIST, WAS PREVIOUSLY WITH KABUL UNIVERSITY MEDICAL FACULTY AND BEFORE CURRENT POST HAD NO ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE. HE HAS BEEN LABELED LEFTIST IN PAST. IN FIRST MONTHS AS MINISTER, SEKANDAR APPEARED ANTI-U.S. AS HE CANCELLED AND RESTRICTED VARIOUS U.S. GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE MEDICAL GROUPS WORKING IN MIN PUBLIC HEALTH. THESE ACTIONS, RUMORED TO HAVE BEEN AT INSTIGATION OF MINISTER'S ASSISTANT MUKAMMEL (SAFI) WERE PART OF PROGRAM TO ENTIRELY "AFGHANIZE" MEDICAL FACILITIES OUTSIDE KABUL DESPITE SEVERE LACK OF TRAINED AFGHAN PERSONNEL. MORE RECENTLY SEKANDAR HAS WORKED CLOSLEY AND EFFECTIVELY WITH USAID POPULATION AND HEALTH PROGRAMS, OFFERING EFFUSIVE PRAISE FOR MEMBERS OF BOTH GROUPS.

2. SEKANDAR, APPEARING MUCH OLDER THAN HIS 65 YEARS, HAS BEEN IN POOR HEALTH SINCE BE BECAME MINISTER, SUFFERING FROM HEART AILMENT AND WHAT APPEARS TO BE SENILITY. BOTH HAVE  
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BEEN CAUSE OF FREQUENT RUMORS OF HIS IMPENDING RETIREMENT,

MOST RECENTLY IN ORDER TO BECOME AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE, A SUGGESTION REPORTEDLY QUASHED BY FRENCH GOVERNMENT FOR UNSPECIFIED REASONS. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT SEKANDAR'S MENTAL STATE COMBINED WITH LACK OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE ALLOWED UNDERLINGS TO RUN MINISTRY AS THEY SAW FIT. THE MINISTER SPEAKS FRENCH, LITTLE ENGLISH (PREFERRING A TRANSLATOR) AND SOCIALIZES INFREQUENTLY FOR HEALTH REASONS.  
ELIOT

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